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R sp nse Und r 37 CFR 1.116
Expedited Procedure
Examining Group: 2121
PATENT APPLICATION

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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of	:	George MAURO
Serial no.	:	9/935,918
Filed	:	August 23, 2001
For	:	DISTRIBUTED PROCESS CONTROL
Group Art Unit	:	2121
Examiner	:	Wilbert L. Starks
Docket	:	NATAPE P 1AUS

MAIL STOP AF
Assistant Commissioner for Patents
U.S. Patent & Trademark Office
P. C Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

RESPONSE AFTER FINAL REJECTION UNDER 37 CFR 1.116

Dear Sir:

[XxX] NO FEES ARE PAYABLE WITH RESPECT TO THIS RESPONSE.

The following Response After Final Rejection Pursuant Under 37 CFR 1.116 is filed in reply to the Final Office Action mailed March 22, 2004 and within two months of the mailing date of the Final Office Action of March 22, 2004. The Applicant respectfully requests entry of the following before reconsideration of the present Application.

In the Claims:

Please cancel claims 21-32 and 34-40, without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter therein, in favor of new claim 41 as follows.

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9/935,918

1-32. (CANCELED)

33. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A method for distributed programmable control of process devices to operate in cooperation to perform a predetermined process wherein each process device is capable of independent operation and of performing one or more related operations and each process device is associated a corresponding one of a plurality of device controllers wherein each device controller controls the operations of the associated process device as directed by a process stored in the associated device controller and wherein a process is a sequence of process steps wherein each step is defined by one or more operations of one or more of the process devices, comprising the steps of:

storing a device process in each device controller, wherein

each device process controls the operations of the associated process device and includes one or more device steps wherein each device step corresponds to a process step and controls one or more corresponding operations of the associated process cevice; and

in a master controller,

during an execution of a device process, generating only step execute identifiers to each device controller, wherein

each of the device controllers is responsive to the step execute identifiers for cooperatively performing corresponding device steps of the device processes,

in a device controller,

generating and providing to the master controller an indication of a completion of a device step by the associated process device, and

in the master controller and responsive to the indication of the completion of a device step of a process step by each of the device controllers directing associated process cevices in performing a process,

generating a next step execute identifier to the device controllers directing the associated process devices in performing a process.

34-40. (CANCELED)

41. (NEW) A method for distributed programmable control of process devices to operate in cooperation to perform a predetermined process wherein each process device is capable of independent operation and of performing one or more related

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